

5 ~~109~~. The method of claim ~~108~~⁴, wherein said arranging comprises determining a payment identifier associated with the player, and wherein the player information is associated with the payment identifier.

Cont 6 ~~110~~. The method of claim ~~105~~¹, further comprising:
arranging for the player to receive a prize based on game play.

B1 7 ~~111~~. The method of claim ~~110~~⁶, wherein said arranging comprises determining a payment identifier associated with the player, and wherein the player information is associated with the payment identifier.

8 ~~112~~. (AMENDED) An apparatus for conducting a distributed electronic tournament for a plurality of players, comprising:

means for exchanging information between a central controller and a player located remotely from the central controller, the information (i) being exchanged while the player plays a game in the tournament and (ii) influencing game play; and

means for storing in a database player information associated with the player, the stored player information being available for use in a subsequent tournament to influence game play of the subsequent tournament while the player is playing a subsequent game in the subsequent tournament.

9 ~~113~~. (AMENDED) An apparatus for conducting a distributed electronic tournament for a plurality of players, comprising:

a processor; and

a storage device in communication with said processor and storing instruction adapted to be executed by said processor to:

exchange information between a central controller and a player located remotely from the central controller, the information (i) being exchanged while the player plays a game in the tournament and (ii) influencing game play; and

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store in a database player information associated with the player, the stored player information being available for use in a subsequent tournament to influence game play of the subsequent tournament while the player is playing a subsequent game in the subsequent tournament.

114. (AMENDED) A device-readable medium storing instructions adapted to be executed by a processor to conduct a distributed electronic tournament, said instructions for directing a device to:

exchange information between a central controller and a player located remotely from the central controller, the information (i) being exchanged while the player plays a game in the tournament and (ii) influencing game play; and

store in a database player information associated with the player, the stored player information being available for use in a subsequent tournament to influence game play of the subsequent tournament while the player is playing a game in the subsequent tournament.

R E M A R K S

- Claims 105 - 123 are pending in the present application.
- Upon entry of this amendment, which is respectfully requested, claims 105 - 114 will remain pending, claims 105, 112, 113, and 114 will be amended, and claims 115 - 123 will be cancelled.
- The amended claims 105, 112, 113, and 114 are independent.

Applicants thank Examiner for extending the courtesy of a telephone interview on November 06, 2001. The amendments made herein are believed to be responsive to Examiner's concerns and suggestions made during this interview.

I. Drawings

The drawings were objected to under 37 CFR §1.83(a) because they do not "show ever feature of the invention specified in the claims." (pg. 2, ¶ 1 of paper 3). Applicants are herein submitting a new method flowchart, Figure 10, that discloses the claimed features of claims 105 - 114 that Examiner objected to as being missing from the figures. Amendments to the specification have also been made to refer to the newly added figure in the "Brief Description of the Drawings" section of the specification on page 9 of the Application. No new matter has been added; the new figure is fully supported by the specification as filed.

II. Claim Rejections under §101

Claims 114 and 123 were rejected under 35 USC §101 because (i) "the medium 'storing instructions to be executed by a processor to conduct a distributed electronic tournament' is a